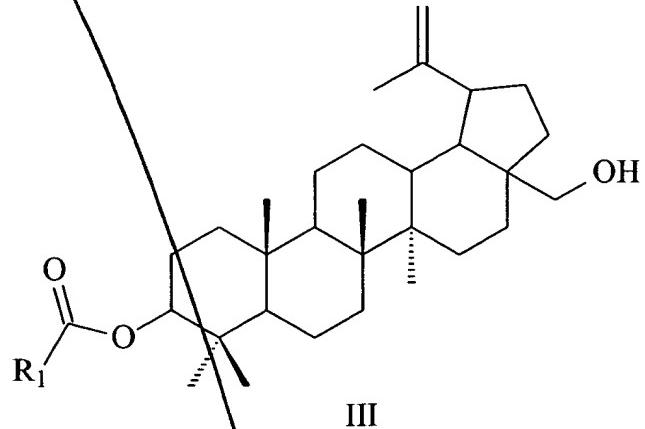


## Claims

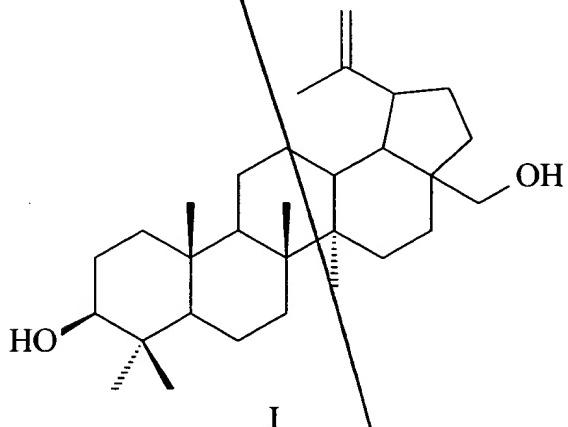
What is claimed is:

1. A process for preparing a compound of formula III



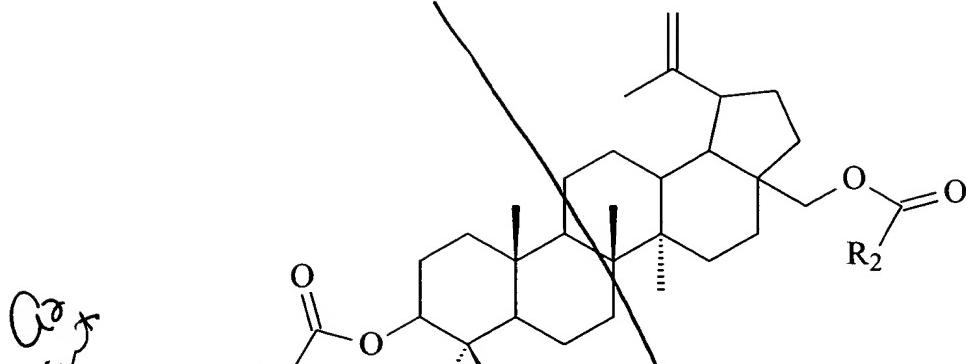
comprising:

- (1) acylating a compound of formula I



to provide a

corresponding compound of formula II



wherein  $\text{R}_1$  and  $\text{R}_2$  are each independently any suitable organic group; and

- (2) alcoholyzing a compound of formula II to provide a corresponding compound of formula III.

2. The process of claim 1 wherein the acylating comprises heating to reflux in acetic acid and acetic anhydride for about 2 hours to about 5 hours.

3. The process of claim 1 wherein the acylating comprises heating in pyridine and benzoyl chloride at about 50°C to about 60°C for about 20 hours to about 30 hours.

4. The process of claim 1 wherein the alcoholyzing comprises heating in the presence of a boron alkoxide and an anhydrous alcohol.

5. The process of claim 1 wherein  $\text{R}_1$  and  $\text{R}_2$  are each  $(\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10})\text{alkyl}$ .

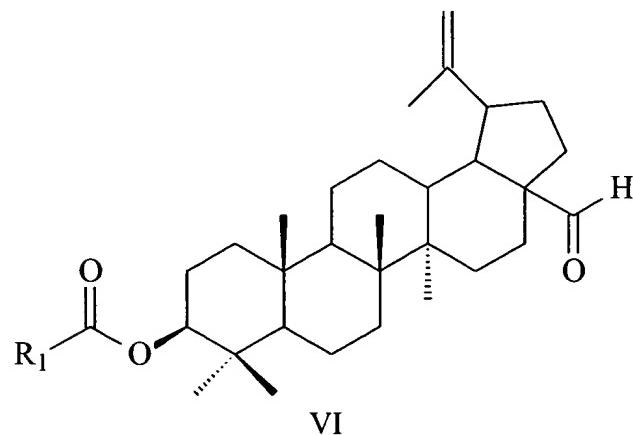
6. The process of claim 5 wherein  $(\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{10})\text{alkyl}$  is methyl.

7. The process of claim 6 wherein the boron alkoxide is boron isopropoxide.

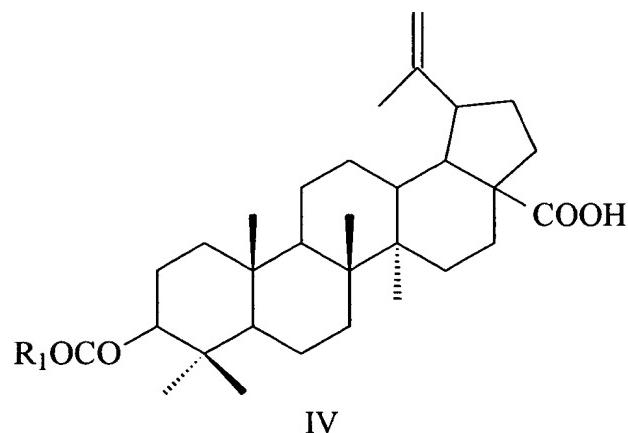
*A3*

8. The process of claim 1 wherein the alcohol is isopropanol.

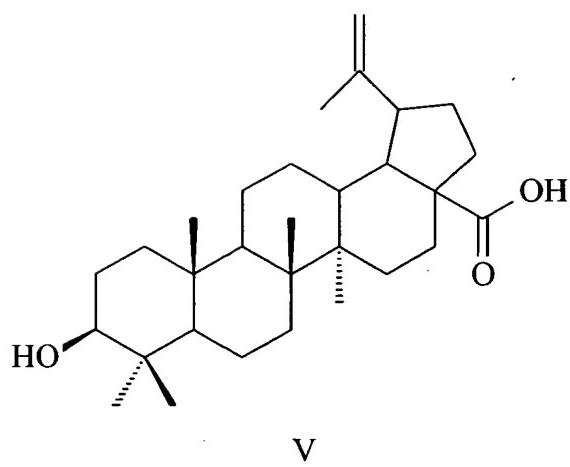
9. The process of claim 1 further comprising oxidizing the compound of formula III to provide a compound of formula VI



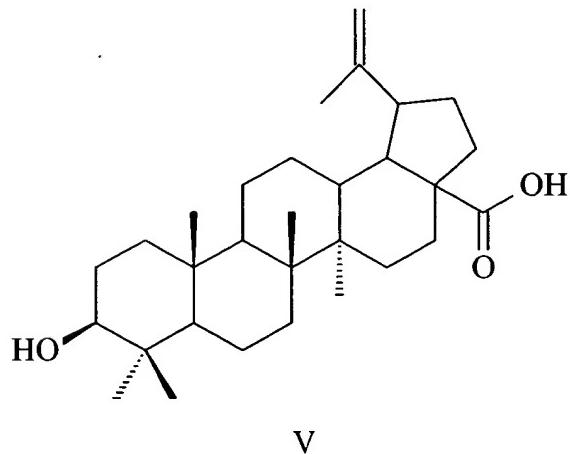
10. The process of claim 9 further comprising oxidizing the compound of formula VI to provide a compound of formula IV



11. The process of claim 10 further comprising deprotecting the compound of formula IV to provide a compound of formula V

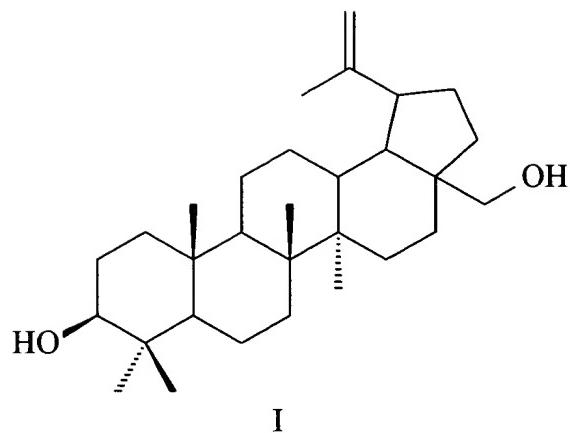


12. A process for preparing the compound of formula V

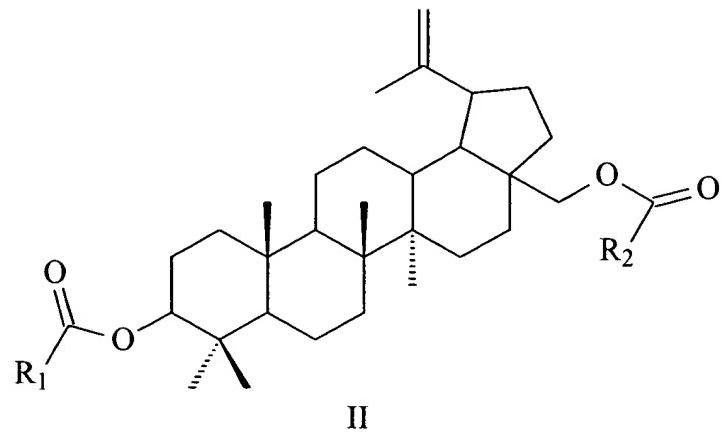


comprising:

- (1) acylating a compound of formula I

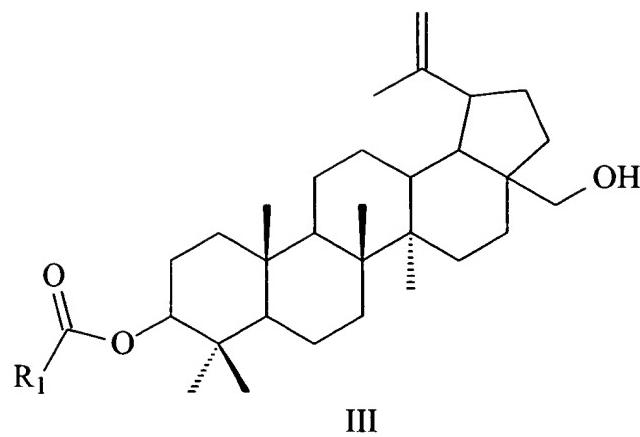


to provide a corresponding compound of formula II

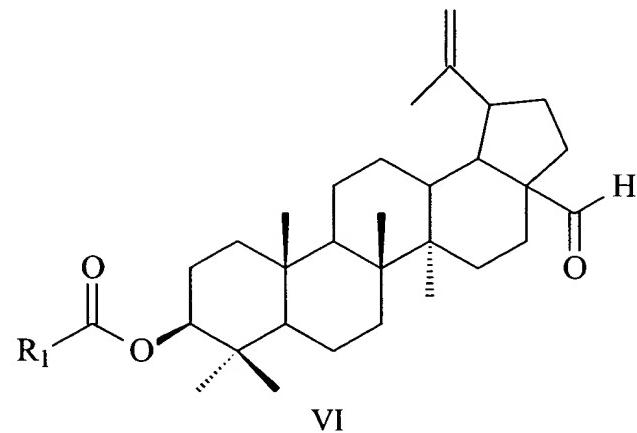


wherein R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub> are each independently any suitable organic group;

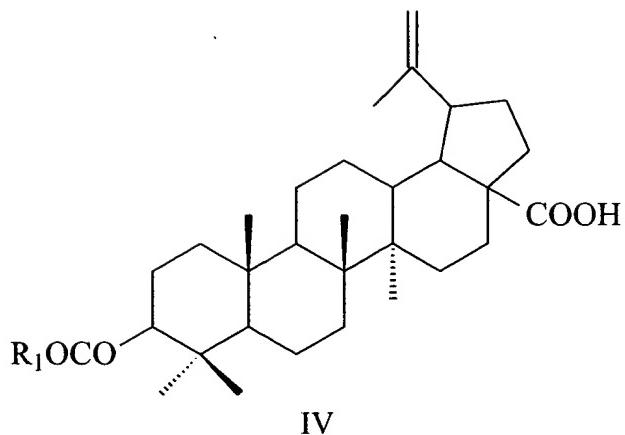
(2) alcoholyzing a compound of formula II to provide a corresponding compound of formula III;



(3) oxidizing the compound of formula III to provide a corresponding compound of formula VI;

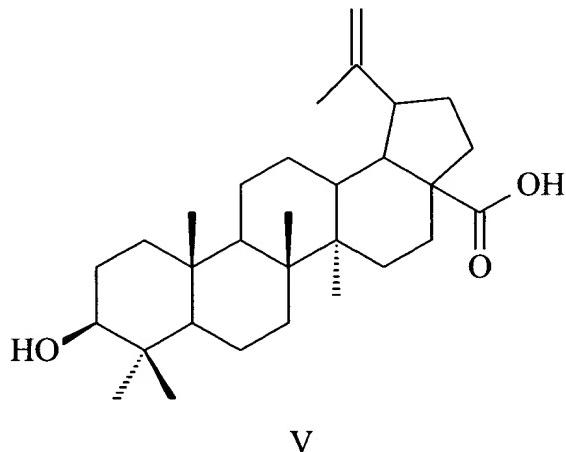


(4) oxidizing the compound of formula VI to provide a compound of formula IV; and



IV

(5) deprotecting the compound of formula IV to provide the compound of formula V.



V

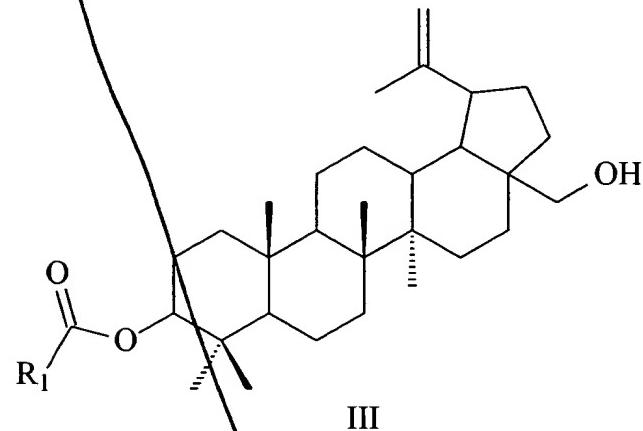
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13. The process of claim 12 wherein R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub> are each methyl.

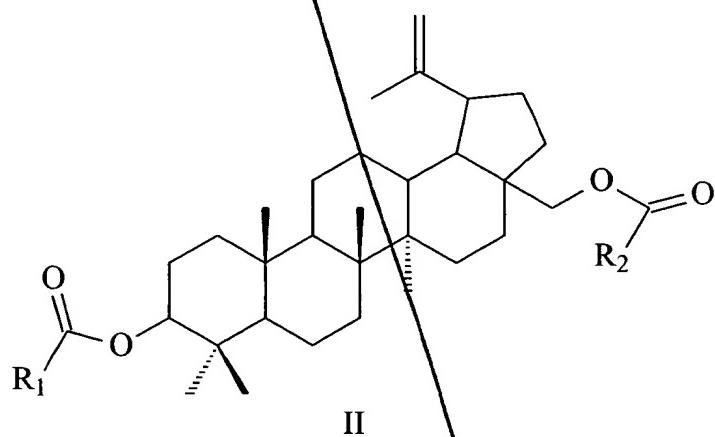
14. The process of claim 12 wherein the alcoholyzing comprises heating the compound of formula II in the presence of a boron alkoxide and an anhydrous alcohol.

15. The process of claim 14 wherein the boron alkoxide is boron isopropoxide.
16. The process of claim 14 wherein the alcohol is isopropanol.
17. The process of claim 12 wherein the acylating comprises heating to reflux in acetic acid and acetic anhydride for about 2 hours to about 5 hours.
18. The process of claim 12 wherein the acylating comprises heating in pyridine and benzoyl chloride at about 50°C to about 60°C for about 20 hours to about 30 hours.
19. The process of claim 12 wherein the oxidizing of compound III to compound VI comprises palladium acetate, molecular sieves, and oxygen in trifluoromethylbenzene and pyridine at about 80°C to about 85°C for about 0.5 hour to about 4 hours.
20. The process of claim 12 wherein the oxidizing of compound VI to compound IV comprises oxygen and Cobalt (III) acetylacetone in trifluoromethylbenzene at 60-65°C for about 0.5 hour to about 2 hours.
21. The process of claim 12 wherein the deprotecting comprises heating to reflux in methanol, water and sodium hydroxide.

22. A process for preparing a compound of formula III



comprising: alcoholyzing a corresponding compound of formula II



wherein R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub> are each independently any suitable organic group; to provide the compound of formula III.